

festival: the Danes from Toronto, Canada, and the Russians from Chicago. The Danes resembled in excellence the American Square dance group from Denver, Colorado, which was absent this year; they stuck rigidly to authenticity and yet danced with the perfection and grace of ballet. The group of over twenty people of varying ages danced with polished beauty and youthfulness. Mr. John Madsen may well be proud of his excellently trained group. The Russians, a highly trained choir of about 40 very tall and handsome men and diminutive and beautiful women, sang their songs to Balalaikas (Russian Stringed instruments and Mandolins) in the style popularized by the Don Kozaks: their director is Sergei Sokoloff. Three couples, highly trained, danced Polyanka, and old Russian dance, Kryzachok, a White-Russian dance and Hrechaniki, a Ukrainian dance. Russo-Ukrainian dances are always hits, particularly when so perfectly performed as by this group, or by the Canadian Ukrainian groups which were missed this season.

There was but one failing in this year's festival which had to do mainly with the participants. In former years the performers were provided with a hall on or near the premises of the festival, where they could gather, become acquainted with each other and dance among themselves. We are sure that this was the intention as far as the festival organizers are concerned, but this year, the hall provided was inconveniently distant and the space pitifully small. This prevented the dancers from becoming acquainted with visiting groups or entering into any social contact which gave rise to discontent. We hope also that in future years an explanation of each dancing group and its background is limited to a brief summary by Miss Knott rather than a long and drawn out and unprepared speech by one of the members of the group. Some of the programs ran one and one and a half hours overtime because of unnecessary talk while the dancers were waiting on the stage and the audience wanting to see them but also wanting to go home, eventually.



THE ROAMING LITHS

ATEITIS Lithuanian Folk Dancers who attended the National and Canadian Folk Festivals. Left to right, front row: Stella Kaupas, Valerie Welicka, Richard Kunce, Sophie Samas, Robert Treonis. Second row: Vince Samaška, Peter Vytautas Daužvardis, Beverly and Therese Samas and Julie Kaupas. Last row: Vytautas Beliajus, Bruno Shotas, John Tamulonis, Fabian Daužvardis and Loraine Samolis.

#### WEDDING BELLS

##### Macke-Pratt

Beautiful Aquilina Maciukas-Macke was united in marriage on May 30th to Walter E. Pratt. The wedding took place at the Lithuanian church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a reception followed at the Evergreen Country Club. Both young people are active in various Lithuanian youth organizations and Birute's choir. Aquilina was one of the early students of V. F. Beliajus and is a VILTITE reader. Her parents are active in various Lithuanian charitable and other organizations. To Mr. & Mrs. Walter Pratt a happy wedded life for ever after.

##### Mankus-Norbut

Two popular young Lithuanians and VILTITES will be united in marriage on July 20th at the Graham Taylor Chapel of the University of Chicago, they are, Irene Mankus and Ben Norbut.

Ben was a S/Sgt. with the army in charge of a supply station. He was stationed for three years in India and one year in the United States. He attended Illinois Tech., is a member of the Don Varnas Post, Birute's choir for eight years, and the LUC (Lithuanian University Club).

Irene has been in the Lithuanian public eye since she was 12 years old when she belonged to BIJUNELIS (The Peony), a children's organization. She compiles a column for that club in various Lithuanian dailies, and, as a columnist, she has continued to the present day for the many organizations of which she was a member: American Lithuanian Council (Taryba), United American Lithuanian Relief (BALF) and LUC. During the war she conducted the LUC HIGHLIGHTS, a mimeographed publication in the form of a service letter which was sent to all LUC members in the armed forces, a deed which was greatly appreciated by the news-hungry boys. She attended Wilson, NW University and U. of C.

Honore Bučinskas will be the Matron of Honor, Edward Norbut, brother, will act as the Best man, while little Agnes Norbut will be the Junior matron. Other ushers and bride's maids include: Mr. & Mrs. Paul Lavers, Ellen Skirmont and Milton Kampikas, Evelyn Kazy and Lloyd Norbut (another brother), and Mr. & Mrs. Edward Mankus.

To the newly weds Ilgaiusiu metu and a Geriausio pasisekimo.

#### BABIES



Francis Anthony arrived on May 27th to Mr. & Mrs. Frank Zelvis, weighing 5 lbs. and 15 ozs. Joan, nee Wodman, is one of the earliest LYS members and at the home of her parents the Lithuanian Youth Society held its meetings and practices for many years. Frank Senior was with the Armed Forces and is an overseas veteran of many tough encounters. To the new arrival and his parents our heartiest congratulations.

## Journey to the World...

by DON BERNARDO GOMEZ

In a previous issue this writer set down his impression of a few of the personalities in the famous Bali-Java dance troupe which for the past eight years has toured the United States, appearing in concert halls at leading Universities, in motion pictures, and more recently in featured roles in night clubs. That particular article was devoted largely to the leader of the troupe, Devi Dja, who before her present career had earned fame in her native Java and throughout the Orient as an actress and solo dancer. Here, the writer will acquaint the reader with other personalities whose exotic beauty and superb artistry have helped to build for the troupe its enviable reputation.

It was not until 1939 that audiences in the United States were privileged to see this troupe perform. Before that time, the troupe with its thirty-odd dancers and musicians had embarked on extensive tours in the capitals of Asia and Europe where they scored some of their greatest triumphs. Their authentic interpretations of Indonesian folk dances and temple ritual won them the acclaim of critics and lay audiences alike. It was natural that they should next tour the western world. Just ahead of the war their tour carried them through Germany, France and the Iberian peninsula, and they gathered up their huge wardrobe of exotic costumes and native instruments and started out for the tour that was destined to make some of them virtual expatriates.

The triumph of the group in North America was immediate. Before this troupe, the American interpreters had gone no closer to sources than the nearest dance studio. By comparison the authentic performances of the Bali-Java troupe compelled all who witnessed them to resort to superlatives. This praise was well earned for these dancers were born to their art. As is custom in the Orient, dancing is a functional part of temple ritual, and the dancers are selected at an early age and put through a rigorous and intensive program of training. The interpretations of these dances is their life's work. When they



DEVI WAN

have attained perfection in their work they are then addressed by the title "Devi" which is affixed to their given names. The title signifies that they are dancers of the temple. It is the single ambition of every young girl in that culture to become a temple dancer and finally to attain the crowning honor of "Devi". Such is the character of the training these artists have undergone. It is then, no wonder that their amazing performances are informed with such precision and beauty.

After the cessation of hostilities some of the dancers and musicians returned to their native countries. Several of the principal performers, however, elected to remain in the States. Among these were Devi Dja, Toto the troupe's chief instrumentalist, and the exotic trio of dancers, Devi Wani, Devi Mimah, and Devi Tinah.

Toto, whose proper name was Mas Toto Blass Trinidad, came originally from Singapore. He was in his own right, perhaps one of the most gifted musicians in the Orient. Before he joined the troupe he had gained recognition as a musical genius, performing with equal skill and imagination on any of a score or more native instruments. In addition Toto had mastered the technique of many Western musical instruments and demonstrated his amazing virtuosity on such diverse instruments as the piano, the violin, the clarinet, the marimba, and the drums. It was Toto's inspired accompaniment that set the atmosphere for the dancers. The easy confidence of his musical interpretations made them not only an integral part of the dance, but works of art in their own right. Under his leadership the other musicians performed with beauty and precision, and the dancers responded with a natural and simple grace, assuming the postures and movements of their interpretations as though they were impelled by some hypnotic force.

Before his recent death, Toto had generously taken under his hand many protegees, among them his son,